Leo Rappoport, an unsmiling lad arrested in December, 1905, was charged with the murder of the Governor of Ekaterinoslav province, General Gelichevsky. The charge rested allegedly on his confession. The day of the assassination, the boy, then fourteen years old, quarreled with his mother, who had refused to let him go out with his girl friend. Enraged, he wrote a note to his mother: "You are treating me like a baby but I am a grownup and have joined a revolutionary party that entrusts me with most responsible acts. Today, for example, I shot General Gelichevsky. . . ." Somehow this letter fell into the hands of the police. It was presented to the military court as a confession!

Yegerev, six and a half feet tall, had to stand trial as the ringleader of an armed revolt in November, 1905. He had just returned from Manchuria, still in uniform, with a service medal. Not very bright and a timid soul by nature, he had learned only one thing in the service: to obey orders. When a demonstration was called in his village and he was told to take his place in the front row, he obeyed; when, as the tallest man in the crowd, he was told to carry the banner, he took the pole. Now the demonstration was described as an armed revolt and he, as the leader, was facing the noose.

The most serious case was that of Karpov, a mining engineer. Tall, of aristocratic appearance, he was the director of a large coal mine. As a sympathizer with the S-R party, he harbored members of underground organizations in his house and occasionally supplied the party with dynamite. Through an *agent provocateur* planted at the very top of the party, the secret police had traced the origin of explosives used in a terroristic attempt and Karpov was arrested. Interrogated, he answered with quixotic straightforwardness. His chance to escape the gallows was slim.

These were the permanent inmates of the tower.

AN ASSIGNMENT

The routine of life in the tower was broken from time to time by the arrival of new prisoners, political and criminal, recently arrested or transferred from other prisons or other wards of the Castle. For some reason the tower was used for deportation and reallocation cases. I questioned the newcomers about what was happening outside our tower, in other prisons and in the free world. I liked to memorize their answers, as if I were writing them down in a notebook. This gave me the illusion of being on a journalistic assignment Just so, I thought, I might sit at a campfire in the